

Testimony:

Re: **Bill 5306 An Act Concerning Recommendations of the Office of Early Childhood**

Dear Committee Members;

My name is Shirley Anderson. I am the Executive Director of a School Readiness and Child Day Care (CDC) in Bristol CT. I would like to submit this testimony to ask for your rejection of the language in bill 5306, Section 6 (see below) as it relates to the accreditation projects (AFP) in Connecticut.

Sec. 6. Section 17b-749e of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2016*):

The Office of Early Childhood shall, **[establish and fund five regional accreditation projects, within available appropriations. The office shall select qualified applicants for each region through a request for proposal process. The office shall give priority to child day care facilities where at least twenty per cent of the children live with families earning less than seventy-five per cent of the state median income level]** within available appropriations, support programs providing child care services to achieve accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The office shall set priorities for receipt of support under this section.

As you are aware of, the AFP has been in existence since 1998. It is regionally based and provides support to all licensed child care providers in CT that wish to be initially NAEYC accredited or to maintain high quality practices and standards by re-accreditation. The AFP **provides free support to all programs** and has helped raise the standards of quality care and practices to many programs within Connecticut. My program has used the AFP since the late 1990's and know that without their continued support throughout the years, we would have financially struggled to provide the professional development to teachers and administrators.

The OEC recognizes the importance of staff education and training which makes a big difference in the quality of care being provided to our youngest citizens. I believe that the AFP exemplifies a system that has worked across all funding sources and has been invaluable to many programs across CT.

Please reconsider the language change in Bill 5306 as related to the regional accreditation projects.

Sincerely,

Shirley Anderson